



Visualizing Success

Creative visualization is a technique that ties in with affirmations and positive thinking. It involves creating mental images about the future, calling upon our imagination to shape the life we want.

Visualization is commonly used by athletes to help in their performance, so that they can picture success and therefore have the confidence to win. In their mind's eye, they are already a winner. Whenever they participate in a race, they are in a winner's mindset. This helps to quell nerves and doubt. It wouldn't make much sense for an athlete to go into a competition feeling negative and unsure, would it?

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Is It for You?

Although you may feel that creative visualization is something too far out for you, or something for hippies, it is surprisingly practical and does not rely on beliefs of any power other than yourself. Try it with an open mind and heart. Visualization can be pivotal in changing the negative feelings you have about yourself into positive ones.

How to Visualize

There are four stages for creative visualization.

- The first state is to think of your goal. Start with a reasonably small goal. This could be,

"I am going to be positive before a test, and stop saying that I'm going to fail". Try to involve all of your senses in imagining your goal. How does it look, sound, smell? How does it feel and how do you feel?

- Then you need to picture the scene. Imagine yourself standing calmly outside the exam hall. You are mentally rehearsing some key facts and diagrams. You see yourself opening the exam paper, recognizing key words, and telling yourself that you can do it. Feel yourself breathing deeply and calmly.
- The next stage is to think about it frequently. In our example here, don't just wait until the exam day itself. Practice your visualization regularly up until the exam day itself. Every time you do, you are building a more positive reality for yourself and strengthening your mindset.
- The final stage is to give your visualization more positive thought. Couple your visualization with affirmations, such as "I will do well in my exam". Build on your image of the visualization, for example working through the exam questions and maybe even enjoying it. Then imagine handing in a completed exam paper with a feeling of accomplishment.

Set the Right Tone for Visualization

Whenever you start your visualization practice, you will need to find some time to yourself and turn off any potential distractions, such as your phone. Practice deep-breathing and allow your body to relax. When the body is relaxed, the mind follows, and imagining becomes easier. Schedule this time into your day.

While visualization can be used for specific events and outcomes, it is also useful for daily life. Perhaps you have a very busy day ahead which is potentially stressful. Imagine yourself going from one activity to the next without becoming flustered, and smiling throughout the day. The joy of visualization is that it tells our brain to think, 'I can.' This is a potent method for increasing self-esteem.

Let it Be Personal

We often confuse how we feel inside with how we look. Visualization can be a solution to both issues. For one, you can visualize yourself as someone strong, fit and healthy. When you are working towards this physical image, you may notice a change in how you start talking to yourself.

Note some of us are more auditory thinkers than visualizers. For some, then, visualization may bring a sense or a feeling of something, without literally seeing it. It is a unique experience for everyone, and it is your choice what and how you visualize.

Here is a useful video to give you further guidelines and information about visualization.

Key Points

- Creative visualization is powerful way of creating a positive future for ourselves.
- We can use visualizations in any area of our life.
- As with many techniques, it needs to be practiced regularly for optimum results.

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